

Clinton administration where employment increased on average 237,000 jobs per month.

"On average, 25,000 private sector jobs have been created each month since January 2001. That is 25,000. During the Clinton administration, private sector employment increased on average 217,000 jobs per month.

"And then, on top of that, average real weekly earnings of the 80 percent of the private sector workers who are employed in production or non-supervisory capacity, approximately 91 million Americans, have increased by less than 1 quarter of 1 percent since January 2001. Average real weekly earnings for these same workers have actually declined by 1 percent since August in 2003."

American people, according to the Washington Times, neither have the jobs nor have they got an increase in their salaries. And that is all the while where energy prices are up, 75 percent, under President Bush, health care costs, the premiums for families are up 78 percent, college costs are up on average 45 percent, and incomes and wages are down. That is what it takes to make and maintain a middle-class life, all the basics, filling up your gas, health care, college education, all skyrocketing.

For the first time since World War II, American savings rates are in negative territory, and this, according to the Bush administration, is the best of times. I would hate to think what the worst of times look like.

And the Washington Times noted how under the President, Americans aren't getting the jobs at the incomes that they are expecting, and the costs for them are going up.

Now, I don't want to look back; but having been part of the Clinton administration, I don't want to have to just be a booster, I would like to remind people we had a surplus 3 years in a row. We eliminated deficit. We started paying down the Nation's debt.

What has happened under this administration? In fact, the debt has increased by nearly \$3 trillion in 4 years, the largest increase in the Nation's debt in the shortest period of time in all of American history.

Second, under President Clinton, we created the Hope Scholarship. Lifetime Learning Tax Credit gave middle-class families a tax cut so they could send their kids to college.

What has the Republican Congress with this President done? They have actually had the largest cut in college assistance in American history: \$13 billion.

President Clinton thought of actually negotiating a climate change, which would have given us our first energy conservation plan. This administration walked away from it; signed an energy bill. In June of 2005, gas was \$2.05. Today it is over \$3. Tomorrow will be the anniversary where energy in America, a gallon of gas, has doubled since President Bush has been in the White House. Doubled.

And what has happened to American family wages? Declined by 1 percent. Cost of energy, doubled.

During President Clinton's time, we actually expanded health care for all children whose parents worked full-time. Ten million children got health insurance. What has this Congress and this Republican President done? They cut 6 million kids from health care coverage. I cannot think of a worse thing to do, and this is the son of a pediatrician talking. I cannot think of a worse thing to do but to cut children from health care, from the ability to visit a doctor or a nurse.

Health care under President Clinton went up for coverage. Health care under President Bush, premiums are up and uninsured are up. Energy costs are up, incomes are down. College costs are up, college coverage is down under the Republicans.

In addition to that, there were many attempts, and we added 20 years to savings on Social Security. And this administration actually for the first time we are at a negative savings rate.

So it is time for a new direction for a Congress and a President who will take this country in a new place.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MCHENRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

KENTUCKY RIVER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue a little bit on what my colleague from Illinois was talking about. We are seeing an assault on middle-income families across this Nation.

Today I would like to join my fellow nurses across the Nation in standing up against another assault against our rights.

The Bush administration National Labor Relations Board's rulings in three cases, known as Kentucky River, could strip nurses and thousands of other workers of their right to belong to a union.

Two years ago, Congress stopped the Bush administration's efforts to classify nurses and other employees as supervisors in order to prevent them from receiving overtime pay. Those classified as supervisors do not have protected rights under Federal law to join or to form unions.

Mr. Speaker, I spent 30 years as a nurse; and I can't tell you how many times I was appointed supervisor for the evening. Under the classifications that are coming down today, so many of our nurses would be losing their overtime.

When we see our nurses, we are finally getting people to go into the health care fields, and now we are doing this to them, where they are not going to have the protections.

As American families face record gas prices, rising interest rates and higher cost of living, the Bush Administration once again is trying to make people work harder for less money and for less benefits.

In recent cases the National Labor Relations Board has taken away workers' protections, workers' rights including the rights of disabled workers, temporary employees, and graduate employees.

This summer could bring more such decisions from the Bush labor board. The "Kentucky River" decisions could strip hundreds of thousands of workers of their rights under Federal labor law. These decisions could potentially affect workers in a wide range of industries, including health care, building, construction, energy broadcasting, and port shipping. Those at risk of losing these Federal law protections are skilled and experienced workers who, as part of their jobs, give instructions to lesser skilled and experienced workers.

As I said, I had done that for many years. Nurses and others should not be penalized for helping those with less experience.

If workers lose their protections as employees under Federal law, they may be fired or otherwise disciplined for union activity. They will lose the freedom to choose to join or remain a member of a union, and they will lose their ability to have a voice on the job.

For example, for nurses, union membership provides a voice on the job and protections needed to be effective patient advocates. A nurse with a union works with confidence to make tough calls to be a strong patient advocate when patient decisions need to be made. Patients need a strong voice to stand up to those who put the bottom line before a patient's health care.

But these decisions will not affect just nurses. Others affected include foremen on construction jobs like my brother, Tommy, or those who work with a team of workers who could lose their union rights under a broad definition of "supervisor." Many a time I have seen people like my father, who became a supervisor to teach the younger workers on how to weld something. This is what teachers do. It does not matter what field you are in. The older you are, the more experienced you are, you want to take the younger workers under your wing.

Thousands of painters, welders, sheet metal workers, plumbers, electricians, and others could lose their right to be in a union. Workers deserve to be heard on this issue, which is why tens of thousands of union members have asked their Members of Congress to appeal to the labor board for an opportunity to provide oral arguments. Uninterested in hearing from working

people, the Bush-appointed labor board has refused since 2001 to hear oral arguments in any case. In fact, this is the only 5-year period in the last 25 years in which the board has not held any oral arguments.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleague to join hundreds of thousands of nurses and other workers to stand up and fight together for accountability from the Bush's labor board. Together, we can make sure these hard-working Americans can have the union representation they deserve and are entitled to.

Mr. Speaker, I think a lot of people forget what the unions have done for this Nation. I think a lot of people forget that it was the unions that basically brought protections. When you think about our coal miners that have been killed in the past year, union representation could have protected them. We in Congress should have been doing that. We have OSHA to protect our workers where hundreds of thousands of people are injured every single year, and yet we see a total eroding of the middle-income families.

Let me tell you what I fear the most: that we are going to have a two-tiered system, the very wealthy and the poorest of the poor. We as Americans can do better.

□ 1930

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHENRY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IRAQ'S CYCLE OF RETALIATION AND REVENGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, some of the most frightening violence in months has erupted in Iraq over the past week. In fact, today was reported to be the worst day of death and violence since the United States started the war 3½ years ago.

On Saturday, Sunni insurgents bombed and destroyed a Shiite mosque. In response, Shiite gunmen dragged random motorists out of their cars in a Sunni Baghdad neighborhood, killing them, killing them with impunity.

The situation has become absolutely terrifying. And, sadly, the cycle of retaliation and revenge is getting worse, not better. Those who think Iraq has not already devolved into a civil war are just kidding themselves. They must think a civil war looks something like two pitched armies battling it out across from each other with muskets and cannons in a giant field.

Unfortunately, today's version of a civil war is a lot more murky. It in-

volves fighting on the streets, not a battlefield. It involves innocent civilians, men, women, it involves children, who are losing their lives, who are living in a great deal of pain and a great deal of uncertainty.

Mr. Speaker, what we can be sure about is that our presence in Iraq is not helping the situation. In fact, the presence of nearly 150,000 American troops in Iraq has become a rallying point for dissatisfied people in the Arab world. This latest surge of violence has coincided with an announcement by U.S. military officials that four more soldiers have been arrested in connection with the rape and murder of a young Iraqi woman and three members of her family.

To be sure, the vast majority of all American soldiers currently stationed in Iraq are bravely and honorably serving their country, but the destructive actions of a few very bad apples have added fuel to the fire, and the Iraqi people want us to leave their country.

The sad truth is that our troops have been failed by their civilian leaders in Washington. They have been misguided. They have gone on a mission that has been fraught with failure from the very, very beginning. The White House is more interested, it appears, in trying to make Iraq seem like a success than actually fixing the problem that plagues the country.

If you go to the White House Web site and if you search for "Iraq," you will find a section called "Renewal in Iraq." This page contains such platitudes as, and I quote the Web site, "Together, Iraqis and Americans are making progress"; and another one, "The United States will settle for nothing less than complete victory in Iraq."

The problem, Mr. Speaker, is that words like "will settle for nothing less than complete victory" or "we'll stay in Iraq until the job is done" are no more than tired old slogans. Most Americans and nearly all Iraqis understand that an open-ended U.S. military presence in Iraq doesn't serve anyone's interests. The very perception that we plan to stay in Iraq permanently is one of the greatest catalysts spurring the Iraqi insurgency.

It is clear that the time is long overdue to bring our troops home. It is time to end the bloodshed and to send a clear message that the United States has no plans to stay in Iraq indefinitely, that we won't occupy permanent bases in Iraq and we won't control Iraqi oil, and that our troops will be coming home. They will be leaving Iraq. They will be coming home to their families.

The American people know this and they want their elected leaders in Congress and the White House to catch up with them.

JUNE FLOODING IN NORTHWEST AND NORTH CENTRAL OHIO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentle-

woman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to discuss the need for changes at FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and how our Nation approaches disaster response in general.

I am one of the Members here that voted not to move FEMA from being an independent agency into the new Department of Homeland Security, and every day that goes by and every disaster that happens proves that was the wiser course of action. FEMA should be restored to its former status as an immediate national response, emergency response agency. It should not be buried five levels down in the Department of Homeland Security, now the second largest agency in our government after the Department of Defense. It simply is too burdensome, and the American people are suffering as a result of it. If New Orleans was not a lesson, if Katrina was not a lesson, if Rita was not a lesson, then what kind of students are we?

Today, I visited areas in my own congressional district in northern Ohio that have been declared national disaster areas now because of the flooding that occurred June 21 through June 23 in northern Ohio. Water rose as high as 6 to 7 to 8 feet, 25 homes were completely destroyed, 317 received major damage, 1,064 received minor damage and 3,262 had cosmetic damage; and that is as of just today.

The local response was rapid and top notch, the best they could do. FEMA's Federal response has been what I would term somewhat timely and not overly effective.

As I have visited with elected officials and residents affected by flooding over these last few days, outlining key Federal help that we can bring to them, I was struck by how disjointed the assistance is and how we try to help people at the local level to apply for what they are eligible for. They simply do not know.

I explained to officials and constituents that Federal assistance might cover losses not addressed with their own personal insurance and that they had to file an insurance claim form with their private insurance company before contacting FEMA. But let me tell you what they require down at the county level.

If, in Ohio, you were affected by the recent flood, they tell you, Go to the FEMA office that we have temporarily established in an adjoining county. So people from the affected county have to go to an adjoining county. When they get to the FEMA office, they are told, Oh, we can't help you fill out the application here. We can just talk to you about it. You have to go to your local library. They have to go back into their home county, go to the main library to try to get into the computer program to apply for the FEMA program.

Well, guess what? The local librarians do not work for FEMA. They do